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How Weathermen Fanned Winds of Violence

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Sometimes you do need a Weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing.

A million-dollar robbery and murderous shoot-outs involving members of the Weather Underground and other denizens of the violent left are grim reminders of the point made here a week ago—that political terror does exist in the United States. Four brutal deaths, appended to an already considerable list, are gruesome witnesses to its reality.

In a series of gun battles in suburban New York, a Brink's guard, two policemen and a robbery suspect were shot to death. Arrested in the aftermath were Katherine Boudin, Judith Clark and David Gilbert, all members of the Weather Underground and Nathaniel Burns, a member of the violence-prone Black Panthers. A dragnet inquiry led to hideouts loaded with guns and ammo, the arrest of two more Weatherpeople and assorted other suspects (see story on page 5).

For Kathy Boudin, it was a second violent go-round in the headlines. The last time she was heard from was in 1970 when a Greenwich Village townhouse used as a Weatherpeople bomb factory blew up, killing three of its inhabitants.

The Weatherpeople, it may be recalled, were a spin-off from the left-wing youth group, Students for a Democratic Society. They wanted to change American society through open violence, in imitation of Marxist terrorists overseas.

As an early statement from the Weatherpeople put it, "we are adopting the classic guerrilla strategy of the Vietcong and the urban guerrilla strategy of the Tupamaros to our situation here in the most technically advanced country in the world." Or, as another had it, paraphrasing Mao Tse-

tung, "political power grows out of a gun, a [Molotov] cocktail, a riot, a commune."

As good as their word, the Weatherpeople committed numerous acts of violence, including the so-called "Days of Rage" in Chicago in 1969, in which 270 people were arrested. Most of all, as the townhouse blow-up suggests, they liked to bomb things. Among the bombings credited to their account in the early 1970s were attacks on the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, the State Department and two dozen other government buildings.

As distinctive as the Weather Underground commitment to violence has been its commitment to foreign communism. In the '60s and early '70s, SDSers who were to become Weatherpeople made numerous trips to Cuba, where they received revolutionary training and indoctrination, and to other Communist strongholds such as North Vietnam, Hungary and Communist China. According to SDS chronicler Kirkpatrick Sale, the travellers became convinced "the collapse of the U.S. government was imminent, perhaps a matter of months rather than years, that the duty of every revolutionary is to make the revolution."

A comprehensive FBI report about these contacts commented that "the revolutionary who has committed his destiny under the banner of Marxism-Leninism establishes his identity with a world center of revolution (in this instance Havana), develops his fraternal ties with that center, and carries out in practice those actions which foster the international relationship.... The enclosed material shows [the Weather Underground] carrying out the policies and purposes of the

Vietnamese...and the Cuban government."

Given all that, it is hardly surprising the FBI believed the Weatherpeople were a menace and took stern measures—including electronic surveillance and "surreptitious entry" of apartments where they thought they could get the needed information. For doing this, as previously noted in this space, two FBI officials were actually indicted by the Jimmy Carter Justice Department (and convicted) while the FBI was placed under crippling restrictions that weakened its powers to protect us from such violence.

Even before these restrictions were imposed, according to a left-wing magazine called *Scanlan's*, the would-be guerrillas had "found it a matter of exultant amusement that the government's intelligence system has turned out to be such a basket-case." The fact that the Weatherpeople have been on the loose for better than a decade would seem to confirm that sad assessment.

The spectacle of FBI officials standing in the dock while violent radicals are free to rob and murder tells us all we need to know about the "civil liberties" agitation of recent years. The Weathermen show it's way past time for a decisive change of policy.